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Welcome to Thomas Tallis Post 16

Welcome to Thomas Tallis Post 16 and congratulations on your place. This letter contains information about the start of the academic year and some of the Sixth Form's procedures. Please share this letter with your parents and carers.

COVID-Safe Procedures

We will say more on the first day back about what measures we are taking concerning the COVID-19 outbreak, although some of these measures are referred to throughout this letter.

Please wear a mask on the school site when in transit between lessons. You may wear a mask in lessons themselves if you prefer. Please wash your hands between lessons and/or use the sanitiser stations that are around the building. When you are not wearing your mask, it should be kept in a sealed plastic bag.

You must travel safely to school, wearing a mask if using public transport. We would strongly encourage you to walk or cycle if you can.

Please follow the advice of Public Health England concerning self-quarantine if you or anyone in your family has any of the symptoms at any point during the year.

Please also be aware that we may have to resume remote learning at any point during the year. We use Microsoft 365 to do this, particularly Microsoft Teams. You will be shown how to use this. If you are new to Tallis you will therefore need to take careful note of your school email address and login details as soon as you are given them.

Checking that students are sensibly enrolled

We take a great deal of care to match students to courses so that every student has a fair chance of success if they work hard for the next two years. We do not want anyone to be disappointed on Results Day for reasons that are beyond their control.

We do sometimes get enrolment wrong, though. In the first three weeks of term, therefore, Ms. Astill and I systematically check that all Year 12 students are correctly enrolled. If we have made a mistake, we will speak to you about it. As all schools do, we reserve the right to assign students to the courses that we judge most likely to lead to their success. We may therefore from time to time reassign students where we believe a misenrolment has occurred. We have the right to insist on this.

Initial COVID-testing: Friday 3 September from 11 a.m.

In line with governmental requirements, we must test all students using the familiar lateral flow test before term starts. For Year 12 students, testing will occur as follows:

11.00 Surnames A-D
11.45 Surnames E-H
12.30 Surnames I-L
13.15 Surnames M-P
14.00 Surnames Q-T
14.45 Surnames U-Z

Students will go straight home again once they have been tested. One further test will take place on Wednesday 8 September during school time and times for this will be confirmed during

the first week. Students will then be expected to test themselves twice a week at home, just as last year.

Start date and time for Year 12 students: Monday 6th September at 8.30

Please arrive for 8.30 a.m. SHARP. We will direct you to the Main Hall, where you will have a brief induction assembly led by Mr Bradshaw and Ms Astill before you are introduced to your Year 12 tutor and so on.

Term dates and early closures

Please find enclosed a copy of the school's term dates for this coming year. Please take note that school closes early for all students on Wednesdays Week B because of staff training. A normal school day will run from 8.40 a.m. until 3:15 p.m., but on the early closure days school will finish for all students at 2:15 p.m.

Useful emails:

The school's standard email address format is jsmith@thomastallis.org.uk where the first letter of the email address is the first letter of the member of staff's name and the rest of the email address to the left of the @ sign is the member of staff's surname. You will have your own Tallis email address in this format.

Please use:

post16admin@thomastallis.org.uk for administrative matters - such as letters confirming student status, revisions to contact details, enquiries concerning school calendar dates etc.

abell@thomastallis.org.uk for attendance and absence - let Mr Bell know if you are away for any reason. If you don't, your parents will be contacted that day.

lastill@thomastallis.org.uk for pastoral matters which cannot be solved by your tutor

How we communicate with you

Email and text is our preferred contact method, both with you and with your parents. We try not to post more than one physical letter every half term and copies of letters are also posted to www.tallispost16.com. The online information portal and independent learning diary which we use is called BROMCOM and you will be given a username and password shortly. Your parents will also have a login so that they can check attendance, whether homework is being done, and so on.

A reminder about our dress code and some of our rules

We have relatively few rules for sixth formers but they must be followed. In general our rules and policies can be found on the post-16 website. Please look over our Disciplinary Policy Flowcharts there so that you understand our approach to conduct, work and attendance - please note that we operate with a clear 'three strikes and you are out' rule as far as poor conduct is concerned.

- Our photo ID lanyards must be worn at all times when on site - these are issued during the first week - replacements are available from Mr Bell - see below - and cost £5
- No hats or earphones can be worn inside (we tolerate earphones in the Silent Study Area)
- Phones must not be visible inside the building - they may only be used at social times and in social spaces
- Coats are not worn in lessons
- Clothing should be appropriate for a school
- Clothing with slogans which are offensive is not allowed
- We encourage the wearing of face masks in the Study Area and in lessons

Attendance, punctuality, absence, illness

We expect your attendance to be above 95% and we begin the process of removing students when attendance is below 90%. Attendance includes our weekly assemblies (Thursday 3.05 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. in the Main Hall) and Tutorial (Wednesday Week A, period 1). Our attendance officer is Andy Bell. His email is abell@thomastallis.org.uk and his phone number is 020 8331 3038. If you are unavoidably absent, your parents must let Mr Bell know before 10am on the day. Mr. Bell also deals with booked absences that cannot be made outside lesson time such as orthodontic appointments etc, and will also contact your parent(s) if you are ill and need to be sent home. If you do need to be sent home during the school day, we must authorise this: please see Ms. Astill or Mr Young for permission. Please note: we cannot authorise any holidays taken in term time; driving lessons cannot be taken during school lesson time.

If you or a member of your household display symptoms of Covid-19, please contact the school immediately and self-isolate for the recommended period.

Independent Learning

A particular focus for our pastoral work is a close focus on the qualities of character needed to excel at A-level study and beyond. We think these qualities can be clearly identified and developed, and we will be in contact with parents/carers early in the new academic year to invite them along to a session where we will explain how they can help you study effectively. In brief, high-achieving students have clear goals, are effortful, systematic, practice in the right way and respond positively to feedback. Our reporting system explicitly focuses on these aspects of academic character.

Curriculum Time 2021-2023 and Independent Learning

Students are timetabled with ten hours of lessons for each A-level subject or equivalent. In most cases, nine of these hours are taught lessons and one is a Study Period which will take place in one of the school's Study Areas. Teaching staff will sometimes set examination papers to be completed during the Study Period, or students may undertake independent work and revision. For information: in the case of last year's Year 13, every single student predicted an A or B undertook at least five hours of independent work in each of their subjects. We would very strongly encourage all students to establish a regular '9-6' pattern of independent work in our various Study Areas, right from the very start of their courses.

Registrations, Assembly, Off-site study periods, known as 'B's, and on-site study

All students will have morning and afternoon Registrations. Morning Registration is from 8.30 to 9 a.m. and afternoon Registration is from 3.05 to 3.15. At first we allow students to book absence from Registration - we call this 'having a B' - twice a week with their tutor. If things seem to be going well, the number of B's may increase; contrariwise, if things are not going well academically, the number of B's will decrease.

Tapping in, tapping out

Every time you enter and exit site you must tap your ID card on the readers by the sixth form entrance. They work like an Oyster card reader, and are an important way we monitor your attendance. If you don't tap in, expect your parents to receive a text asking why you're not in school, and for us to then haul you over the coals about why your attendance is so poor. Tap in and tap out please.

Monitoring your progress

As a school we use an online homework diary called BROMCOM. Additional lesson resourcing is also posted to your Microsoft Teams account. You'll be given a BROMCOM login, as will your parents/carers - their username will be the email address they gave us as a priority contact, and

yours will be your Tallis email address. BROMCOM allows you to see your attendance, punctuality and independent learning being set, and allows your parents to monitor it as well.

Bursary applications

We offer two kinds of Bursaries for students who aren't 'Looked-After' children. If you apply for and receive Free School Meals (apply through your council's website) we will award you a substantial School Bursary, paid half-termly if your attendance is good and you work steadily. If your family receive Working Tax Credits we may be able to award you a Book Bursary. Application forms for this are available from the Sixth Form Office. Please apply immediately: the deadline is the middle of September.

Biometric, Medical, and exam dispensation information - we need this!

We operate a cashless biometric payment system at Tallis, and we need parental permission to scan your fingerprint. The fingerprint's not retained but the personal code it generates is. We can supply an ID and PIN instead although most students find this less convenient. Please complete the following document online at <https://tinyurl.com/y9wourt9>.

We also need information regarding your GP and any medical conditions you have. Tell us about this in as much detail as you can.

If you qualified for exam dispensation at your previous school, please tell us about this in detail and ask your previous school's Exams Officer or SENCO for a copy of your "Form 8" application. If you don't provide this information to us, it's very likely that it will take a long time to establish your entitlement to any extra time or other dispensations and you may miss out.

Meeting for new Parents Wednesday 22 September 5.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.

We will confirm this nearer the time. For now, please ask your parents to put a meeting with the sixth form team in their diaries for Wednesday 22 September, Main Hall, 5.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m. We will begin promptly. We will explain the demands placed on you by sixth form study, what support from us is on offer and how they can support you to succeed. They will also be able to ask us any questions they may have.

Other key dates for your diary and your parents' diaries

Week beginning 18 October: first data report sent home

Week beginning 17 January: Mock examinations

Wednesday 9 March 3.30p.m.-6.30p.m.: Parents Evening: student mock results and the second parental report given out.

Week beginning 9 May: Mock examination, sat in class

Week beginning 20 June: Third set of data about you sent home.

Week beginning 4 July: Re-mocks for those who need to take them

Week beginning 11 July: Progression Week - applying to university, Arts College, apprenticeships.

We look forward to meeting you on 3 September for your COVID test (!) and your parents on 22 September.

We wish you every success for the year ahead.

Please remember to complete the biometrics and medical form online prior to September 4.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Bradshaw". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Louise Astill
Head of Year 12

Jon Bradshaw
Assistant Headteacher: Head of Sixth Form